

**GREEN PAPER
ON
PLANNING FOR AGRICULTURE:
FOOD LAND GUIDELINES**

**Prepared By
The Ministry of Agriculture and Food**

**GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO
1977**

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the document entitled "A Strategy for Ontario Farmland" released in April 1976, the Government of Ontario declared its commitment to maintain a permanent, secure and economically viable agricultural industry for Ontario, not only as a producer of food, but as an important component of our economic base, a source of employment, and as the basis of the rural community and the rural way of life.

To accomplish this the Government announced two broad initiatives: measures to ensure that within any area the better land is kept for agricultural purposes, and programs to ensure the economic feasibility of using the best land for agricultural production.

In the "Strategy for Ontario Farmland", the Government also indicated it would prepare guidelines to assist municipalities in planning for ongoing agriculture. The Food Land Guidelines outlined in the following pages are intended to assist local municipalities, counties or regions in planning for agriculture in the preparation of Official Plans or Amendments which may affect rural land. The Guidelines also relate to land use or zoning bylaws and severance and subdivision policies.

The Food Land Guidelines provide a methodology to incorporate agricultural considerations into local plans. The Guidelines outline ways to identify agricultural resource lands, locate lands of highest priority to agriculture, designate areas of agriculture, develop policy provisions in support of agriculture, and implement these measures in municipal plans. These Guidelines will be the basis for

evaluating future planning documents for their consideration of agricultural concerns.

Ontario has a sophisticated system of land use planning. Initially this was oriented towards solving urban problems. Plans considered the potential for urban growth, and the needs for residential, industrial and commercial activities. More recently, planning has also taken into account rural land uses. The evaluation of agricultural capability and the designation of land for permanent agriculture are now central elements in planning documents. The Food Land Guidelines are intended to outline the considerations necessary to incorporate agricultural concerns into land use planning.

The Government is concerned about retaining our options to meet future requirements for foodlands and food. The trends of the market place, of supply and demand, determine how much land is actually in agricultural production at any particular time. Our land use policies and planning must assure that as much as possible of the land area with the **capability** for agriculture is kept available for farming when needed. Some areas of land with the ability to grow crops are not presently in production because the demand for additional crops does not exist at present. An increasing population will require production from lands with potential for agriculture. Wherever possible, we must assure that these lands remain available for the future. The Food Land Guidelines are an aid in making the necessary planning decisions to keep our better agricultural lands for agriculture.

CHAPTER TWO

IDENTIFYING AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE LANDS

The first step in preserving agricultural lands is to identify the better agricultural lands of the planning area. An inventory of the agricultural resource must be assembled as part of the larger review of the resource base found in any planning study.

In identifying agricultural resource lands, the concern must be with those lands with the **capability** or potential for agriculture, not just the lands presently in production. Many areas which are currently lying idle, in rough pasture or scrub bush, have a **capability** to produce food which is not currently utilized.

The Government of Ontario considers the better agricultural land to include the four categories outlined below. How these are identified, and how this may be tailored for the specific area are explained further on.

High capability agricultural lands are considered to include the following:

- All lands which have a high capability for the

production of specialty crops due to special soils or climate.

- All lands where soil classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 predominate as defined in the Canada Land Inventory.
- Additional areas where farms exhibit characteristics of ongoing viable agriculture.
- Additional areas where local market conditions ensure agricultural viability where it might not exist otherwise.

Specialty Crop Areas

Specialty crop areas depend upon special soils or climate or a combination of both. The Niagara fruitlands, the Holland Marsh, and the Georgian Bay apple area are three examples of specialty crop areas. Such areas are of particular importance because they are limited in extent within the Province, and produce crops which would not be otherwise available. An inventory of agricultural resource

lands must identify areas suited to specialty crops. These include, among others, the following:

- Tender fruit areas: peaches, grapes, cherries, plums, etc.
- Apple and pear growing areas.
- Tobacco areas.
- Potato lands.
- Greenhouse areas.
- Vegetable areas.
- Processing crop areas.
- Organic soils.

Organic soils, some of which are useful for specialty crops, have been classified separately from the mineral soils identified in the Canada Land Inventory. With the exception of organic soils, there are no maps that fully identify specialty crop areas. County soil surveys and local knowledge of agriculture are required to locate specialty crop areas. All specialty crop areas should be identified to determine whether separate policy consideration is necessary.

The Canada Land Inventory

The Canada Land Inventory of Soil Capability for Agriculture¹ is a recognized and readily available system of classifying lands according to their inherent capability for agriculture.²

This system provides an inventory of all lands in Ontario. It takes climatic factors and the hundreds of soil types in the Province, and groups them into seven classes based on their capability to produce common field crops, using current economically feasible farming methods.³ Field crops include such crops as corn, wheat, oats and barley. They do not include the specialty crops previously discussed.

Class 1 lands are the most productive for agriculture, and Class 7 lands are not of any use for agricultural purposes.

The specific breakdown is as follows:

- Class 1 - No significant limitations for the production of common field crops.
- Class 2 and 3 - Moderate limitations for common field crops.
- Class 4 - Marginal in capability for field crops.
- Class 5 and 6 - May be suited for pasture.
- Class 7 - No agricultural capability

¹The Canada Land Inventory also provides capability ratings for forestry, recreation, wildlife and waterfowl. These may be useful for other facets of plan preparation.

²To order Canada Land Inventory maps, see Appendix.

³It should be noted that the Canada Land Inventory of Soil Capability for Agriculture is based on the Ontario Soil Survey. The Ontario Soil Survey provides a soil report for each county in Ontario, and these reports could be used as an alternative method to identify soils with agricultural capability.

In addition to rating mineral soils on this basis, the Canada Land Inventory also indicates any limitations such as stoniness, wetness, slopes and susceptibility to erosion. Some of these limitations may be removed through capital expenditure on such improvements as drainage and stone removal.

Class 1, 2, 3 and 4 soils are capable of the sustained production of common field crops, even though some limitations may exist. Normally, Class 5 and 6 soils are suitable only for pasture which can be converted by grazing animals to animal protein, for consumption by man. These soils therefore may be important for future meat supplies. Where such soils exist in conjunction with better soils they deserve consideration.

For the purpose of identifying agricultural resource lands, Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4 soils should be outlined. In many cases these soils will be associated in complexes of more than one soil type with certain restrictions upon productivity. Areas to be identified, therefore, are those in which Class 1, 2, 3 and 4 soils **predominate**. It may also be desirable to identify some Class 5 and 6 soils which occur in conjunction with higher class land, and which together with the better soils may provide for contiguous areas of farming.

Areas of Ongoing Viable Agriculture

Although the specialty crop areas and the Canada Land Inventory Soil Classes 1 to 4 will cover most lands that are of significance for agriculture, some areas that are in crop production because of other special circumstances may not have been identified.

The first of these would be additional areas where farms exhibit characteristics of ongoing viable agriculture. These may include individual farms or farming areas, which, because of management skills or particular farming techniques, are able to conduct successful farm enterprises where they might not otherwise be expected. They may also include areas with a complex of soils which together create conditions for viable agriculture where separately they might not. Where these areas are significant, they should be added to the inventory of agricultural resource areas.

Areas Viable Due to Local Market Conditions

The second example is additional areas where local market conditions ensure agricultural viability where it might not otherwise exist. This criterion would apply to areas adjacent to major urban markets as well as to Northern Ontario, where distance from primary sources of supply, particularly for dairy products and fresh vegetables, provide local farms with an economic advantage. Because of the importance of local sources of agricultural produce to these communities, agricultural areas serving local markets should be identified and protected.

CHAPTER THREE

SORTING LAND NEEDS

The criteria and process described in the previous chapter indicate how the better agricultural lands in an area can be identified. The next step in the planning process is the evaluation of the land resource base in the planning area and the uses competing for that land, to determine how the land can be allocated to meet land use needs. This analysis provides the rationale for subsequent land use designations and policies in the Official Plan.

Priorities Among Farmlands

The four categories of agricultural land identified in Chapter Two are not equal in productivity. In order to proceed with the analysis of the land base and the competing uses, it is necessary to give a priority rating to the different types of agricultural lands.

Specialty crop areas should be given a very high priority. Such areas are limited in extent, and the loss of part or all of them will have a major impact on the capability of the province to produce these crops. Specialty crops are high value crops which contribute significantly to the provincial economy, and the province does not wish to be dependent on other nations for these commodities.

Among Class 1, 2, 3 and 4 soils, the Class 1 soils are the most productive, the Class 2 soils slightly less productive, and so forth. Class 1 soils should therefore be given higher priority than Class 2 soils, Class 2 soils should receive a higher priority than Class 3 soils and so forth.

Consideration must also be given to areas where the four categories overlap. For example, high capability soils under the Canada Land Inventory classification that are also suited to specialty crops have a higher priority than those not suited to specialty crops.

Within a single category of agricultural resource land, there are additional factors that can be used to judge the significance of the resource. Existing areas of viable farming, special markets, contiguous blocks of agricultural land, or concentrations of capital investments in facilities such as greenhouses, livestock buildings, crop storage facilities, and land improvements such as fertilizers, drainage and stone removal all enhance the importance of the agricultural resource and raise its level of priority.

Evaluation of Alternative Uses

The allocation of land uses is rarely simple within a given area. The land may have the capability for several different uses, or a variety of land uses may be competing for land with a single, overriding capability. The land needs must be analyzed to determine where various land uses such as residential, industrial, commercial, open space and agriculture will be in competition for the same land. The resolution of these conflicting demands will vary according to the types of land use to be accommodated, the amount and nature of the land resource available, and the future growth pressures expected. The following examples outline some of the situations that may arise.

Where potential for such resource uses as forestry, or sand gravel extraction overlap with areas having agricultural potential it is necessary to determine which activity receives higher priority for any given area. In some instances, forestry, or sand and gravel extraction must have priority. In other areas, agriculture will have higher priority. The conflict among these uses is not severe, however, because forest areas can revert to agriculture in the long term, and extractive areas can be rehabilitated for agriculture in many instances.

Highway commercial establishments, institutional buildings and small rural industries have traditionally been permitted to locate at random in agricultural areas. Such activities take up good farmland, and may conflict with adjacent farm activities. They usually do not need to be located on good agricultural land in order to operate. Such activities should be directed to nearby urban areas or be permitted to locate only on lower priority agricultural lands or on marginal resource lands.

Where an agricultural resource has been identified, the use of these lands for agriculture, or a use compatible with agriculture, or capable of reverting to agriculture, must be accorded central importance in the analysis of land uses. While many factors must be taken into account, the allocation of land, among the various land use designations must reflect a priority for agriculture. If good agricultural lands are converted to other land uses, this loss of food land must be justified.

CHAPTER FOUR

DESIGNATION OF LANDS AND POLICY

The previous chapters describe how to identify and inventory agricultural resource lands, and how to allocate the lands available within a municipality among the activities which compete to make use of that land. The next step is to develop land use designations and supporting policies in the Official Plan. This chapter describes how this may be carried out. The three general areas which are discussed in the chapter are as follows:

- A. Agricultural Designations and Associated Policies
- B. Other Rural Designations
- C. Urban Designations

A. Agricultural Designation and Associated Policies

Agricultural lands must be clearly identified and shown within the Official Plan and on the land use map, and the policies applied to these areas must adequately protect them for present and future agricultural use. Circumstances of land capability and demands upon that land may be such that more than one type of agricultural designation will be necessary. The highest priority agricultural lands must be separated out into large, contiguous blocks¹ and given greater protection for agriculture than is generally provided. A second agricultural designation would be less restrictive, permitting some non-agricultural activities which may be necessary in rural areas. Policies in current Official Plans may be suitable for these agricultural lands of lesser priority, but they are inadequate for our best lands.

The following discussion on Agricultural Policies, Code of Practice, Compatible Uses and Severances is intended to apply to the highest priority agricultural designation. A discussion of suitable policies for lands of lesser agricultural priority is included at the end of this section. The designation of other uses in the rural countryside is treated separately under Section B "Other Rural Designations".

A.(1) Agricultural Policies

Within the agricultural designation applied to the high priority agricultural lands, the following policy concerns would be applied:

- (1) The lands within the agricultural designation are to be available for agricultural use on a long-term basis.
- (2) The types of activity or land use that will be permitted within the agricultural designation should be indicated. The types of activity or land use permitted should only include agriculture, land uses compatible with agriculture, and activities directly related to agriculture and necessary in close proximity to farm operations. Compatible uses are discussed under a separate heading later in this chapter.

¹This concept is amplified in *Countryside Planning, A Pilot Study of Huron County, prepared for the County of Huron and the Province of Ontario by James F. Maclaren Limited, Environmental Consultants, Toronto/London, Ontario. August 1976. Published by Ministry of Housing, Government of Ontario.*

- (3) Reference to the Code of Practice and the Minimum Distance Separation Formula should be incorporated into the Official Plan. This is covered in more detail in the sub-section entitled "Code of Practice" later in this chapter.
- (4) Policies should be included with regard to utility and communications facilities to ensure that their impact on agriculture is minimized. This is particularly desirable in County or Regional Plans, and should cover new highways, power lines, oil or gas pipelines, water and sewer lines, and solid waste disposal sites. For utilities that affect agriculture only during construction, such as oil and natural gas pipelines, policies may refer only to construction activities. For utilities which permanently affect land, such as highway routes or solid waste disposal sites, policies may also consider location criteria.
- (5) Policies should be outlined for severances within the area designated agricultural. This is an important consideration, and is discussed later in this chapter under "Severances".
- (6) Urban development such as expansion of town or rural residential growth should be in a separate designation from high priority agriculture.

A. (2) Compatible Uses

A compatible use in an agricultural designation includes land uses in support of agriculture, as well as uses which, while not related to agriculture, can continue adjacent to agriculture without conflict and permit the land to revert to food production.

Activities directly related to agriculture and necessary in proximity to farm operations may include such facilities as cold storage for fresh produce, grain drying, or animal husbandry services. They do not include other services where proximity to farm operations is not critical. These should be located in a nearby hamlet or town, or on lands of limited resource capability.

A non-related compatible use leaves the land in large parcels suitable for commercial farming, does not require buildings or other construction on the lands, and does not alter the soil or topography adversely. It includes such activities as forestry, open space, and certain types of recreation.

A. (3) Agricultural Code of Practice

The Agricultural Code of Practice is a set of guidelines which applies to management of livestock operations and to the rational use of land in relation to the livestock industry.

It contains guidelines for farmers on the storage and spreading of animal manure to minimize pollution of air, groundwater or surface streams. The Code provides a method using the Minimum Distance Separation Formula (MDS) to calculate an appropriate distance between an

existing or proposed livestock building and another use on an adjacent lot to reduce the likelihood of nuisance complaints. The actual separation distance will vary depending on the size and type of livestock operation and the type of manure storage system. The advantage of the MDS formula is that it applies not only to a new or expanding livestock operation locating near an existing use, but also to other new uses being proposed in the vicinity of an existing or proposed livestock operation. As is appropriate for an agricultural designation, the formula ensures that the livestock operation has a reasonable opportunity for continued expansion.

In any new or amended Official Plan, reference must be made to the Agricultural Code of Practice and the Minimum Distance Separation Formula. The relevant policies in the Official Plan should indicate that the formula will be applied reciprocally, both for new livestock operations and new residences.

A. (4) Severances

In May of 1975 a revised severance policy was adopted by the Government of Ontario. A significant statement in that policy was that the Government intended to give greater protection to resource lands, and particularly agricultural lands.² The policy stressed that Official Plans should contain criteria for granting severances. These policies are to encourage rural-residential development to locate on other than prime resource lands, and preferably in existing urban areas (towns, villages, hamlets) where urban type services are readily available. In agricultural areas, it was indicated that the only permissible severances are those related to agricultural needs.

The following is an amplification of these policy suggestions on severances with respect to agricultural designations. It is recognized that farm related severances may be expected within agricultural designations. Non-farm severances are discouraged in the most restrictive agricultural designation but may be located in areas of limited agricultural capability.

(a) Farm Related Severances

Farm related severances in areas designated agricultural can be grouped into several distinct types:

- (1) The parcel to be severed and the parcel to be retained are viable farm units. Viability depends on the type of farm operation and local conditions. It can be determined in consultation with staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- (2) The severance is required for technical reasons. These may be for boundary adjustments where one land owner is deeding part of his property to the adjacent land owner, or for other legal or technical reasons, such as easements or rights-of-way or any other purpose that does not create a separate lot.
- (3) Farm consolidation has rendered a farm house surplus, and a severance is requested to dispose of the second house. In this instance, the size of the lot should be kept to a minimum. If the farm buildings formerly associated with this second house are in close proximity to the house, as determined by the

MDS formula, the farmer should be encouraged to rent the house rather than create a potential future problem for himself by risking a non-farm resident adjacent to his livestock barn.

- (4) A farmer who has been farming a substantial number of years and who is retiring from active working life needs to sever one lot on which to build a house in which he intends to retire. Because the lot may subsequently be taken over by others and create problems for the adjacent farm operations, the farmer should be encouraged to consider a mobile home on the farm or to retire in a nearby village or town.
- (5) A residential lot is required to provide accommodation for full-time farm help. This may be for hired help or family members (son or daughter) whose working activity is primarily devoted to the farm operation and where the nature of the farm operation is such that it requires this help to be accommodated close to the farm. This accommodation should be provided as part of the farm unit rather than on a separate lot. The accommodation could be a conventional dwelling or a mobile home.

In both 4 and 5 above, the lot, if created, should be kept small to avoid using excessive land area. Its size should be no larger than is necessary to support a well and private sewage disposal system as determined by the Medical Officer of Health.

(b) Non-Farm Severances

The familiar non-farm residence on a half or 1 acre lot, or the estate type residence on a 2, 5, 10 or 25 acre lot is wasteful of agricultural land resources, since the lot size is usually too small for commercial agriculture. More important, the proliferation of such housing is creating conflicts with farming since the expectations of rural life of these urban-oriented residents differ from those of the farm community. The owners of these lots often complain about noise, manure odours, and dust from cultivation which may drift onto their property. They may not respect the privacy of adjacent farmland. They may trespass on foot or snowmobile, and damage crops and fences. Their children and pets may also damage crops and frighten livestock. Increased numbers of vehicles on rural roads make it more difficult to move farm machinery.

The rural-residential dwellers may also make demands on municipal services. This can include better road upkeep, dust control on roads, early and more frequent snowplowing, and regular garbage pickup. Better parks and recreational facilities may be demanded, or better fire and police protection. While all such services may be desirable, they are generally more expensive to provide to scattered rural dwellings than to residents clustered in villages or towns. Scattered development also sharply increases provincial costs because many of the services demanded by rural non-farm residents are subject to provincial subsidy.

In spite of the problems associated with scattered development, there has been a strong demand for such lots. The trend is alarming because of the cumulative impact this has been having on farmland, and because of its effect of eroding the traditional role of villages and hamlets. Policies should redirect this activity away from agricultural land.

To protect agricultural land from this pressure, other areas may have to be provided into which this demand can be guided. First and foremost, residential development of

²This policy is available through a Ministry of Housing publication entitled "Land Severance".

this type should be encouraged in the villages and hamlets. The traditional role of these communities as residential area and local service area has been eroding in many parts of the province, and this may help to re-establish their role. Secondly, since all such development is not appropriate for hamlets, provision may have to be made for estate residential or rural residential development in rural areas which are not suitable for designation as agricultural. Where estate residential development is permitted it should be on limited areas of low potential resource land and in a separate designation. Severance applications which may create rural-residential lots must not be allowed within a high priority agricultural designation.

A. (5) Agricultural Lands of Lesser Priority

The agricultural lands of lesser priority within the inventory are also to be included within an agricultural designation. It is recognized that this designation may not be as restrictive as the one applied to the agricultural lands of highest priority. Many of the policy considerations outlined above will apply to this second agricultural designation. Availability of the land for agriculture on a long-term basis, definition of permitted uses, reference to the Code of Practice, policies on utility and communications facilities, and severance policies are equally important for this designation. The way in which this area may differ from the high priority agricultural designation is in the wider range of existing uses found within the area, or in the broader definition of compatible uses to include limited amounts of such activities as highway and rural commercial

B. Other Rural Designations

Other land in the countryside which is not included in the agricultural designations will be placed in other rural designations. Some of these will have other potential resource uses, such as sand and gravel extraction, forestry or recreation, and will be appropriately designated. There will also be areas with a limited capability for resource use, and the extent of these marginal lands will vary widely throughout the province. Where such marginal lands exist in abundance, municipalities may have the opportunity to encourage development on these lands. Where such lands are limited in extent within a municipality, the amount of non-agricultural development or non-resource development within rural areas will have to be curtailed. It is not the intent of these guidelines to indicate policies for other resource lands or for marginal lands, other than to indicate that the use of these lands must be considered within an Official Plan.

C. Urban Designations

Much has been written on urban designations. The following are additional considerations applying to urban designations and agriculture.

C. (1) Hamlets and Villages

In many Official Plans in the past few years, these small urban places have received little attention. In many cases, they have been simply identified as a spot on a map in which a limited amount of residential, commercial and industrial development may take place, subject to private servicing systems. The small centres have had an historical relationship with the surrounding farm community, however, providing basic services and a place for retirement.

They also provide an alternative living style to large urban places.

Land use plans should pay more attention to these places to ensure a compatible location for activities. The growth of these small centres should not conflict with and destroy the surrounding farm activity that originally led to the growth of the centre. Attention should be directed to making these communities more attractive to some of the demand for rural residential development. Growth of these centres should take place as a logical extension of existing development, grouped rather than scattered, and designed as an asset to the rural countryside.

The following policies should be applied to these settlements. The opportunity to meet the criteria outlined will vary from centre to centre:

- (1) Hamlets should be differentiated to determine which centres will be encouraged to expand, and which will be limited in future growth. One criterion for this is to limit growth of hamlets surrounded by good agricultural land and encourage growth of hamlets surrounded by poorer agricultural land.
- (2) For those hamlets in which growth is to be encouraged, a secondary land use schedule is advisable as part of the Official Plan. This would provide specific designations for residential, commercial and industrial growth.
- (3) Where agricultural resource capability of lands surrounding a centre varies, growth is to be encouraged onto poorer areas.
- (4) Village growth is to be discouraged onto viable operating farms or in the direction of livestock operations near the community.

C. (2) Towns and Cities

Despite the concern with adequate protection for agricultural lands, it is recognized that all other growth and development cannot and should not stop. Historically, many of our urban centres have located in areas of high agricultural capability or production, and continued growth is necessary. However, measures can be taken to minimize the impact of this growth on the agricultural areas, or to divert it in a direction where agricultural capability may be lower.

The following guidelines would apply here:

- (1) In all instances, the underlying principle is that the better foodlands are retained. While consideration must be given to the logical extension of existing urban areas, in those cases where the better agricultural lands are not retained for agricultural use, the need of this land for other purposes must be justified. This includes a documented and demonstrated need for the land use in that municipality or particular urban centre, with reasoning as to why the use cannot be located on poor or non-agricultural lands or within existing non-agricultural designations.
- (2) The population projections proposed in the plan must be realistic and compatible with provincial growth objectives for the general area.
- (3) The amount of land allocated for various uses must be realistically related to population and growth projections.
- (4) Where urban growth trends indicate the continued absorption of prime foodlands, studies must be undertaken into the possibilities for increasing urban

densities or redirecting part of the growth to communities situated on lower capability foodlands.

- (5) Development of existing vacant lands within urban areas must be encouraged before expanding outward onto good agricultural land.

C. (3) The Rural-Urban Boundary

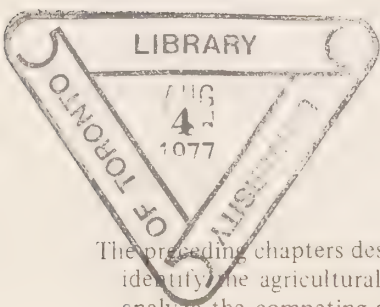
The boundary between urban and rural areas is the scene of growing conflict and problems for a stable, healthy agricultural industry. Land speculation, fragmentation of land parcels, conflicting land uses, competition for land, and the uncertain agricultural future within these areas are leading to a lessening of agricultural productivity and potential, in an ever-widening band surrounding urban centres. Generally speaking, the larger the urban centre, the wider is this area of uncertainty or conflict.

To help lessen this problem, the following guidelines are suggested:

- (1) An area separating agriculture and urban use, and particularly agriculture and residential use, will inevitably develop and should be provided for as part of the urban designation. The means of delineating the boundary between agriculture and urban residential uses should take into account the possibility of existing commercial strips or industrial areas, road-

ways or utility corridors, or natural features such as a stream, tree covered valley or ridge, as an easily identifiable boundary. The established buffer areas should be identified and their suitability for continuation should be considered. In extending an urban boundary, features of this nature should be sought to define the urban areas for the life of the plan.

- (2) The shape of the urban area affects the length of the rural-urban boundary. The length of this boundary should be kept to a minimum. Long strips or intrusions of urban development into agricultural areas should be avoided. Similarly, strip development along a road underlain by services to nearby hamlets should not be permitted where the area is not part of a compact unit.
- (3) The boundary designation should be refined to show definite staging in 5 to 10 year intervals or time contours which will indicate the direction and extent of future urban growth, the rate at which it will occur, and the time limits within which agriculture can occupy the area as an interim use. This is an important way of indicating the direction of urban growth for a considerable time into the future to reduce uncertainty and speculation in areas where growth will not be permitted.



CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL GUIDELINES

The preceding chapters describe the methods to identify the agricultural resource lands within an area

- analyze the competing demands for the resource lands
- designate areas of agriculture
- support agricultural designations with planning policies.

These steps furnish a sequence for the consideration of agricultural priorities in land use planning. The application to local conditions of the various elements outlined for each step will provide policy directions for incorporation into a local Official Plan, or a County or Regional Official Plan to ensure that the better agricultural lands are protected.

The responsibility for land use planning rests with local government. This is subject to provincial review and approval. The provincial concern in reviewing plans is for issues of broad provincial application such as the definition and protection of the agricultural resource. The Food Land Guidelines provide a methodology for the systematic consideration of agricultural concerns in land use planning. They will be the base for evaluating the provisions for agriculture in future planning documents.

The use of the Guidelines to designate agricultural areas also provides a means of allocating scarce financial resources to minimize waste and duplication. In the future, financing for rural development such as land drainage will be easier to obtain for areas where there are agricultural designations that guarantee the land will be available for agriculture over time. The priority in development of

highways, and water and sewage services for urban land uses will also depend on the presence of comprehensive land use designations that take into account not only the urban requirements, but also the agricultural and rural needs.

It is expected that these Guidelines will be implemented over the next few years as new plans are introduced and old plans amended. Where an amendment to an Official Plan will have an impact on agriculture, it is expected that the procedures in the Guidelines will be followed. Municipalities with old official plans or with plans that do not protect prime agricultural lands are encouraged to review and update their official plans. Over the next three to five years with plans now under review, and the regular amendment of plans, it is expected that all plans will be brought into conformity with the Guidelines. Progress will be reviewed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to determine that these Guidelines are being effectively incorporated into municipal planning in Ontario.

In following the procedures outlined in the Guidelines for the identification, evaluation, and designation of the agricultural resource, there are several important sources of information available. The Guidelines and other publications provide government policy on planning for agriculture and other land uses. The Agricultural Office, situated in each county or district, is a source of information on agricultural capability, agricultural practices and agricultural viability. Local branches of the various farm organizations can also be consulted for information on local conditions.

For interpretation or further explanation of the intent of the Guidelines, staff of the following Ministries may be contacted:

Food Land Development Branch
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Local Agricultural Offices within each
county and district
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Community Planning Advisory Branch
Ontario Ministry of Housing

Official Plans Branch
Ontario Ministry of Housing

Regional Offices
Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics and
Intergovernmental Affairs

Environmental Approvals Branch
Ontario Ministry of the Environment

APPENDIX

Canada Land Inventory Mapping

Canada Land Inventory mapping of Soil Capability for Agriculture is available at two scales. Broad coverage mapping in colour at a scale of 1:250,000 is available at \$1.00 per copy from

Publishing Centre,
Department of Supply and Services,
270 Albert Street, Ottawa, K1A 0S9

More detailed coverage in black and white maps at a scale of 1:50,000 is available at \$0.50 per copy from

Graphic Arts Services
Room 28
Johnston Hall
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario

All orders should specify the municipalities for which coverage is required.

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